



Festival Notes

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Search Me...

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

About a month ago Judi and I were coming home from the Brockville Riverfest. On our way back home we traveled along Highway #2. We reached Trenton at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Just as we reached the eastern outskirts of the city, we heard a roar overhead! There were two jets zooming above us! With Trenton Forces Base close by, we didn't think much about it. However, just as we approached the Base, police diverted us north on a side road. We wondered if there had been an accident. As we drove up the road, a number of cars had pulled off to the side of the road. People were standing there, looking upwards, with binoculars to their eyes. I simply thought that they were simply watching Air Force planes take off and land. My father and I had done that many years ago at Toronto International Airport. Thinking nothing more, we followed other cars on the detour. We traveled north and then turned west and continued until we reached another road that took us south again and back to Highway #2. Just as we came parallel to the Base, hundred of people started to cross our road! The Trenton Air Show was now over! The point of my story is that Judi and I had just missed visiting one of the best events of the year, and it was in our own backyard! This year had been special because it was the 100th anniversary of powered flight in Canada! When I had looked earlier the previous month for festivals and event to visit that weekend, this event had not shown up on any of my usual festival and event sources! As a result, I am sorry to say, we missed it! Unfortunately this happens all too often! Festivals and events are missed because they are not listed or easily found on the major festival and event source guides. This is one of the reasons we are creating our NEW *Festival Finder* search engine.

Please see *Search Me...* on page 3

Great Festivals... Crazy Weather!

July started off with a bang! Literally, after all, July 1st was Canada Day! On Canada Day Judi and I decided to travel to 4 different communities to visit their celebrations. Our first visit was to Brighton. We arrived fairly early, but there were a fair number of people there enjoying the festivities and the pancake breakfast. After Brighton we traveled northwest to Warkworth. They were just in the process of setting up when we arrived. Next it was on to Campbellford where we were just in time to hear the Mayor's welcoming remarks. From Campbellford we went to the Hasting Canada Day Celebrations.

Please see *Great Festivals...* on page 2



"Canada Day Celebrations"
Warkworth



"1000 Island Dock Dogs – Big Air "
Brockville Riverfest

Great Festivals ... from page 1

At their town Band Shell we watched a very talented family sing, fiddle and dance! The whole day was great, and we plan on making the traveling to different Canada Day celebrations a yearly tradition!

Although we didn't make it to all the scheduled festivals and events, we did visit 5. This was quite the feat when you consider the *crazy weather* we have been "enjoying" lately! After our Canada Tour, we visited the Brockville Riverfest. This was an excellent festival that was held on the banks of the St. Lawrence River. The next event was in Prescott for the St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival. The people there, including Prescott Mayor Suzanne Dodge treated us like long lost friends! After Prescott it was off to Smiths Falls and the Canal, Railway and Chocolate Festival. We had been to this event two year's earlier, so we interested to see what changes had been made. There we were greeted by Festival Chair, Jim MacPherson, Councilor Dawn Quinn (past Festival Chair) and Mayor Dennis Staples. We also had the opportunity to enjoy a Voyageur Canoe trip into the Smiths Falls "Swale". Also treated to the Canoe trip was Jim Brownell, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Tourism. See "*Swale*" article below. The final adventure for the month was in Wasaga Beach at the "Wasaga Under Siege" re-enactment. The event, coordinated by David Brunelle, re-enacts the 1812 Battle at Wasaga between British and American forces and the British's attempt to save their ship, H.M.S. Nancy. David, by the way is the newly appointed Project Director for the Southern Georgian Bay War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee. 1812 is the 200th anniversary of the Battle of 1812 and there are numerous celebrations planned to honour this milestone! I hope to write several articles about this subject in the weeks and months to come, plus a full blown Special Edition newsletter!

August will be another busy month with a number of visits scheduled. Here is our projected schedule:

August 1st - Mill Race (Folk) Festival (Galt/Cambridge)

August 8th - Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival (Almonte)

August 9th - Festival of Textiles (Lang Pioneer Village, Keene)

August 14th - Buckhorn Fine Art Festival

August 15th - Fanshawe Pioneer Village Harvest Fest (London)

August 16th - Toronto Zoo 35th Anniversary Celebration

August 16th - United States Marine Corps Joint Ceremonials (Fort Henry, Kingston)

August 22nd - Bobcaygeon Wine and Food Festival

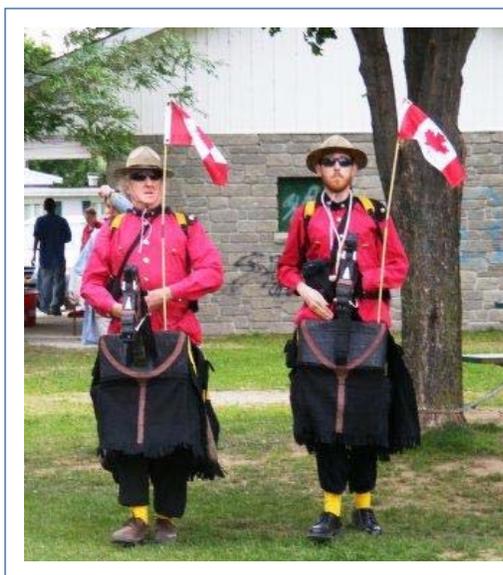
August 29th - Toronto Buskerfest

September 5th - Canada's Largest Ribfest (Burlington)



"Taming of the Shrew"
St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival

"The final adventure of the month was..."



"A ROYAL Canadian Escort!"
Canal, Railway and Chocolate Festival

The Swale...

Off in the distance we could see a Great Blue Heron searching for food along the banks of the reed covered shoreline! Quiet beauty surrounded us! This was nature at its best! Who would have guessed that we were in the middle of the historic town of Smiths Falls! This was Friday afternoon, and we were in town to help celebrate the opening of the Smiths Falls' annual Canal, Railway and Chocolate Festival. One of the many featured attractions was the Voyageur Canoe Tour.

Please see *The Swale...* on page 3



*"The Americans Attacking"
Wasaga Under Siege*



*"Entering Locks on the Rideau Canal"
Canal, Railway and Chocolate Festival*



*"Lily Pads in the Smiths Falls Swale"
Canal, Railway and Chocolate Festival*

Search Me ... from page 1

We want to make sure that all festivals can be found. We know that this is a lofty idea, because it is going to take the co-operation of festival and event organizers. However, I do believe that it is possible to list the majority of Ontario's festivals and events. Right now Judi has accumulated a list of over 1,000 festivals and events. There are reportedly over 5,000 in Ontario, so there is still a long way to go, but we are hoping through research and persistence and a little luck that we will find most of them by the end of the year. So once we have the search engine up and running (hopefully by mid-to-late August) we hope you will go onto it and try to find your favourite festival or event. If you don't, please let us know so that it can be added to our list of events.

The Swale ... from page 2

Festival Chair, Jim MacPherson, had arranged for Judi and me to join others on the Voyageur Canoe tour of the Rideau Canal and The Swale! What an opportunity! We left the docks at Centennial Park and traveled a short distance up the Rideau Canal to the canal lock. Once inside the lock, the lockmaster shut the gates and started to let water into the lock. We slowly rose until we were even with the water above. Leaving the confines of the lock, we paddled to a large open body of water. This was *The Swale*, a class 1 wetland "situated right in the backyard of Smiths Falls"! A natural wonderland that is full of birds, flora and fauna. We paddled along the shoreline examining the plant and animal life as we glided along. Everywhere we looked there was something new to investigate! Our steersman acted as our guide to this exciting journey, telling us about *The Swale* and the history of the Voyageur Canoe pioneers who had preceded us. At one point, close to the shore, our guide spotted a discarded pail. Rather than just pass it by, he asked us to stop paddling and then to back stroke so that he could retrieve it. Once it was safely in the canoe, we continued paddling. We were all impressed with this simple act of stewardship. All too soon we rounded a bend and we were back in civilization! Our journey back in time was almost at an end. I think everyone in the canoe was sad to see the lock appear! This was certainly an adventure to remember. As we reached the dock at Centennial Park, I wondered how many Smiths Falls residents had explored *The Swale*! Fortunately, there is still time this year. The **Rideau Roundtable Voyageur Canoe Tours** are available from May 24 to Thanksgiving. To find out more, visit their website at <http://www.rideauroundtable.ca/voyageur.html>. If you are ever in the area, make sure you explore the Rideau Canal by Voyageur Canoe!



"Cobourg High School Re-enactors"
Cobourg Canada Day Celebrations

Festival Tips

Everyone's Talking About It!

Everyone's talking about the need to "Go Green", but how many people are actually doing something about it? A while ago I met, through our website, someone who *"talks the talk and walks the walk"*! The lady's name is Jana Campbell and her company is

"LunchWithoutWaste.com". While her website is aimed at kids and Litter-less Lunches, I think the principle forms a valuable lesson for Festival Visitors. I've talked in the past about the use of re-useable water bottles and the idea of preparing and packing your own festival meals. Jana, in her recent article *"Practical Tips on how to have a Litter-less Lunch"*

(<http://www.lunchwithoutwaste.com/LitterlessLunches.aspx>), tells us how to go about it. The "Tips" show us how we can accomplish *"Litter-less Lunches"* in a simple but meaningful ways! Anyone who is tired of just *"talking about it"* should definitely read Jana's article and then visit her website

(<http://www.lunchwithoutwaste.com/Default.aspx>) She has loads of really neat and funky items that will make "Going Green" practical and FUN, especially for the kids!

Festival Ideas...

Each month this section features ideas gained from attending so many festivals. For the July issue we want to talk about the "Living History". A few weeks ago, I wrote an article on the "Nomad's Blog" about historical re-enactments and youth involvement. We are republishing it for your enjoyment/information?

Living History...

On July 1st of this year our 15 year old nephew became a soldier! No, he did not join the Canadian Armed Forces! He did, however, join his fellow students and their history teacher in a re-enactment demonstration at the Cobourg Waterfront Festival. Seeing him and the other young people becoming involved in re-enacting Canada's past made me think of the thousands of men and women and their families who dawn period costumes each summer and fall weekend to become "living history"! As David Brunelle, one of the organizers of Wasaga under Siege (July 24-26), said to me, *"It's like taking your family on an 'old fashioned' camping trip!"*, old canvas tents, open fires, boiled coffee, toasted marshmallows and spending quality time with people who have similar interests. Besides, who doesn't want to play make believe, shoot muskets and wear neat clothing! All that being said, re-enactments and re-enactors play an important part in Canadian society. With the great number of new comers immigrating to our marvelous country, it gives them the opportunity to learn about Canada's history and why it is such a great country to live in. Re-enactments also help show how Canada and the United States became separate countries and how we eventually learned to live in peace together. Even if you are not a history buff, re-enactments are exciting and entertaining! The pageantry, colour and action all add up to a wonderful experience! Whether or not our nephew and his friends become further involved in re-enacting, at least they will have had a chance to experience "first-hand" a part of Canada's history! My hat is off to his history teacher and all of those other adults who encourage our young people to take an active interest in living Canada's past!

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"Re-enactors' Encampment"
Nancy Island
At Wasaga Under Siege